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HOMEMAKERS' CHAT

TUESDAY, January 7, 1941

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

SUBJECT: "QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS." Information from the Office of Experiment Stations, U.S.D.A.

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Once again the week's mailbag is filled with food questions. And once again the answers come from scientists at the different State experiment stations who have been investigating these very questions.

To begin with, here is a question about cooking frozen fruit. A housewife says: "I have some frozen cherries I want to use in pie. But I don't know whether I should let the cherries thaw before putting them in pie, or put them in still frozen."

Food scientists at the Michigan Experiment Station advise putting frozen fruit directly into the pie without thawing it first. They advise this for both dry pack-frozen fruit and sugar-pack fruit. The same is true if you are making preserves of frozen fruit. Put the fruit in the kettle still frozen. It will thaw and cook at the same time.

But frozen fruit not used for cooking is another story. If you aren't going to cook the fruit, serve it just before it is completely thawed. You can thaw fruit frozen without sugar in sirup. Fruit packed in sirup is best left in its container to thaw. The Michigan scientists report that a small package of fruit standing in cold or lukewarm water takes an hour to an hour and a half to thaw.

So much for the question about frozen cherries. Now here's a question about cooking apples to save flavor. A housewife says: "Has any food scientist ever investigated the best ways of cooking apples to save flavor?"

The answer is: Yes, the New York State Station has spent some time testing

apples for their cooking properties, flavor and texture.

Here's how the New York State investigators advise making applesauce with the maximum of natural apple flavor. They say: Make a sirup of one-third cup of sugar and three-fourths cup of water. Add this hot sirup to a pound and a half of peeled, cored apples. Cook in a covered pan as fast as possible until just tender.

(Other food scientists will tell you that just a few grains of salt in apple sauce help bring out the apple flavor. Of course, you have to be very careful to use only a few grains, or your sauce will be salty.)

Now maybe you would also like the New York State directions for saving flavor in baked apples. Here they are: Wash and core apples but leave the peel on. Weigh the apples. For each pound of apples put 5 teaspoons of sugar in the baking pan. Set the apples in the pan. Cover the dish. Then cook in an oven registering 400 degrees Fahrenheit until the apples are nearly tender. Remove the apples from the oven and let the heat of the covered dish finish the cooking.

Chief points to remember about saving flavor in fruit are: Cook in a covered container, cook as fast as you can without scorching the fruit, and don't overcook. At this time of year apples have less flavor than they had in the fall. So sometimes a little lemon juice helps the flavor of applesauce, or a dash of cinnamon or nutmeg. But remember, if you add too much flavor of any kind, you cover up the taste of the apple.

The third question is about iron in vegetables. A homemaker interested in providing her family with plenty of iron-rich foods writes: "Are greens the best vegetables for iron?"

Greens are one of the vegetables that contain considerable iron. But beans, peas, and other legumes appear to be even better than the leafy vegetables for building red blood, according to recent research at the Mississippi Experiment Station. Apparently the body can get at the iron in legumes more easily than it

can get at the iron in leafy vegetables. The Mississippi scientists also report that the iron in sorghum and sugarcane sirup, especially the unrefined, homemade sirup, and the iron in molasses is easy for the body to use.

This report from Mississippi would seem to indicate that the old New England Saturday-night supper of baked beans and brown bread did its part in building red blood for the family. Beans baked with molasses is a dish that adds iron to the menu. Brown bread made of molasses and whole-grain flour does the same.

The last question today comes from a lady with a new electric mixer. She reports poor results from trying to cream fat and sugar for cake in her new mixer. She wonders what the trouble is.

Perhaps the trouble is too high a speed. The Indiana Experiment Station reports that you get the most volume in creaming fat and sugar if the mixer runs at a lower speed.

That completes the food questions for today. Listen for more questions on Thursday.

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